REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-12 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 1 under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112 as indefinite because said user at line 12 lacks antecedent basis. Claim 1 has been amended by adding "in response to a request by a user" at line 4 to provide antecedent basis for "said user" at line 12. Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection of claim 1 under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112 is obviated by the amendment.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-7, 9, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0133444 to Defaix et al., hereafter Defaix in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,449,624 to Hammack et al., hereafter Hammack.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. Independent claims 1 and 7 have been amended to recite:

"a validation function operable on said processor to determine whether said import object is eligible for automatic check-in, wherein said validation function comprises:

determining if said import object already exists as an existing object in said process control system;

if said import object already exists as said existing object, determining if said existing object has a status of checked-in;

if said existing object is checked in, determining if said user has permission to check-in; and

if said user has permission to check-in said existing object, then locking said status of said existing object so as to validate said import object".

Independent claims 1 and 7 recite a validation function that comprises a sequence of four steps in which each step is conditioned on the preceding step. Independent claims 1 and 7 have been amended to clarify that the fourth step is performed "if said user has permission to check-in said existing object". The Examiner contends that Defaix discloses the validation function, citing paragraphs 0035, 0032, 0007, 0039, 0040 and 0029. These paragraphs do not disclose the claimed sequence of four steps. Only paragraph 0035 describes a validation function that is used by server 100 to validate a request by a user of client 300 to check-in a file, which the user has modified. The validation function consists solely of determining whether the file is locked. If so, the user's request is denied. If not, "then the central server 100 informs the client 300 through proxy server 200 that its update is allowed". This validation function of Defaix has no relevance to any of the four steps of the validation function recited in independent claims 1 and 7. In fact, paragraph 0035 does not mention any of the four steps of the validation function recited in independent claims 1 and 7.

Moreover, Defaix does not disclose any of the four steps as a part of the validation function described in paragraph 0035. With respect to the first of the four steps, the Examiner cites paragraphs 0032 and 0035. As noted above, paragraph 0035 merely describes checking to see if the file that is the subject of the request is locked out. This is not a determination of whether the import object already exists in the process control system as claimed. Since the files that client 300 uses can only be files stored in repository 102 (paragraph 0032), the server has no need to make this determination. Therefore, paragraphs 0032 and 0035 do not support the Examiner's position. Thus, Defaix lacks the first step of the claimed validation function.

With respect to the second step of the validation function, the Examiner cites paragraphs 0007 and 0035. Paragraph 0007 located in the Background of the Invention section, describes a locked *checkout* mechanism to control access to files. Defaix apparently uses such a locked *checkout* mechanism to determine if the file that is subject of the client's request in paragraph 0035 is *checked out* and locked by another client. In contrast, the second step recites "if said import object already exists as said existing object, determining if said existing object has a status of *checked-in*". Thus, Defaix merely discloses checking to see if the file is locked to another client and does not check to see if the import object has a status of checked in. Therefore, Defaix lacks the second step of the claimed validation function.

With respect to the third step of the validation function, the Examiner cites paragraphs 0039 and 0040. However, it is questionable that the password procedure described in paragraphs 0039 and 0040 is used by the validation function described in paragraph 0035. Paragraphs 0039 and 0040 describe a password procedure for proxy 200 and client 300 that is used by server 100 to grant permissions of proxy 200 and client 300 and to add the permissions to an access control list 110, which is then used to validate requests by proxy 200 and client 300. However, there is no description of when this is done. Since client 300 can only use files stored in repository 102 of server 100 (paragraph 0032), it must be used when client 300 requests the file for its sandbox 306. However, there is no description that once this request is granted, the control list would later be consulted for a request concerning the file already checked out to client 300. Thus, paragraph 0035 when considered with paragraphs 0039 and 0040 do not explicitly teach that server 100 uses the password procedure in the validation function described in paragraph 0035. Therefore, Defaix lacks the third step of the claimed validation function.

With respect to the fourth step of the claimed validation function, the Examiner admits that Defaix does not disclose this step. The Examiner contends

that Defaix's teaching is "such that only the developer who owns the lock can modify the file by checking in a new version (see 0029)." The Examiner concludes that it would be obvious "to lock the status of the existing object to prevent other developers from modifying the file when the file is being checked in". This contention and conclusion is erroneous. The locked checkout mechanism disclosed by Defaix (0007) locks an object *upon checkout* and not *upon check-in* as recited in claimed fourth step of the validation function. There is no teaching in Defaix to modify the locked *checkout* mechanism of paragraph 0007 to be a locked *check-in* mechanism. Therefore, the Examiner's contention and conclusion are erroneous.

Hammack, which was cited for a different reason, does not supply the above mentioned deficiencies of Defaix. Therefore, claims 1-7, 9, 10 and 12 are unobvious in view of the combination of Defaix and Hammack.

For the reasons set forth above, it is submitted that the rejection of claims 1-7, 9, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is obviated by the amendment and should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claim 11 under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as unpatentable over Defaix in view Hammack as applied to claim 10, and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0019827 to Shiman et al., hereafter Shiman.

This rejection is obviated by the amendment to independent claim 7 for the reason that the combination of Defaix and Hammack lacks the above noted deficiencies of independent claim 7, from which claim 11 depends via intervening claim 10. Shiman, which was cited for a different reason, does not supply the deficiencies. Therefore, claim 11 is unobvious over the combination of Defaix and Hammack and Shiman.

For the reasons set forth above, it is submitted that the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is obviated by the amendment and should be withdrawn.

The Office Action cites a number of patents that were not applied in the rejections of the claims. These patents have been reviewed, but are believed to be inapplicable to the claims.

It is respectfully requested for the reasons set forth above that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112 and 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn, that claims 1-7 and 9-12 be allowed and that this application be passed to issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

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